

Huntington Beach State Park



S O U T H C A R O L I N A





Over 330 spp. Of birds have been recorded at the park

Conservation issues affecting beach nesting birds:

- Predators
- Disturbance by dogs
- Disturbance by people
- Loss of nesting habitat



Simpler is better!



Partnering with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers



Maintenance dredging of Murrells Inlet



Building a beach for the birds







**Shorebird
Nesting Area**

Jetty

**North
Beach
Parking**

**Huntington Beach
State Park**

Image © 2007 DigitalGlobe
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Pointer 33°31'20.01" N 79°02'24.96" W elev 0 ft Streaming 100%

Eve alt 6424 ft

Shorebird Nesting Area

Introduced Predators



- Red Fox- first recorded at Huntington Beach State Park after Hurricane Hugo in 1989.

Introduced predators

- Mink- re-introduced into Murrells Inlet in 2001.
- Have since settled into the jetty.



Introduced predators

- Coyotes have replaced red foxes as potential predators.



Unexpected predators

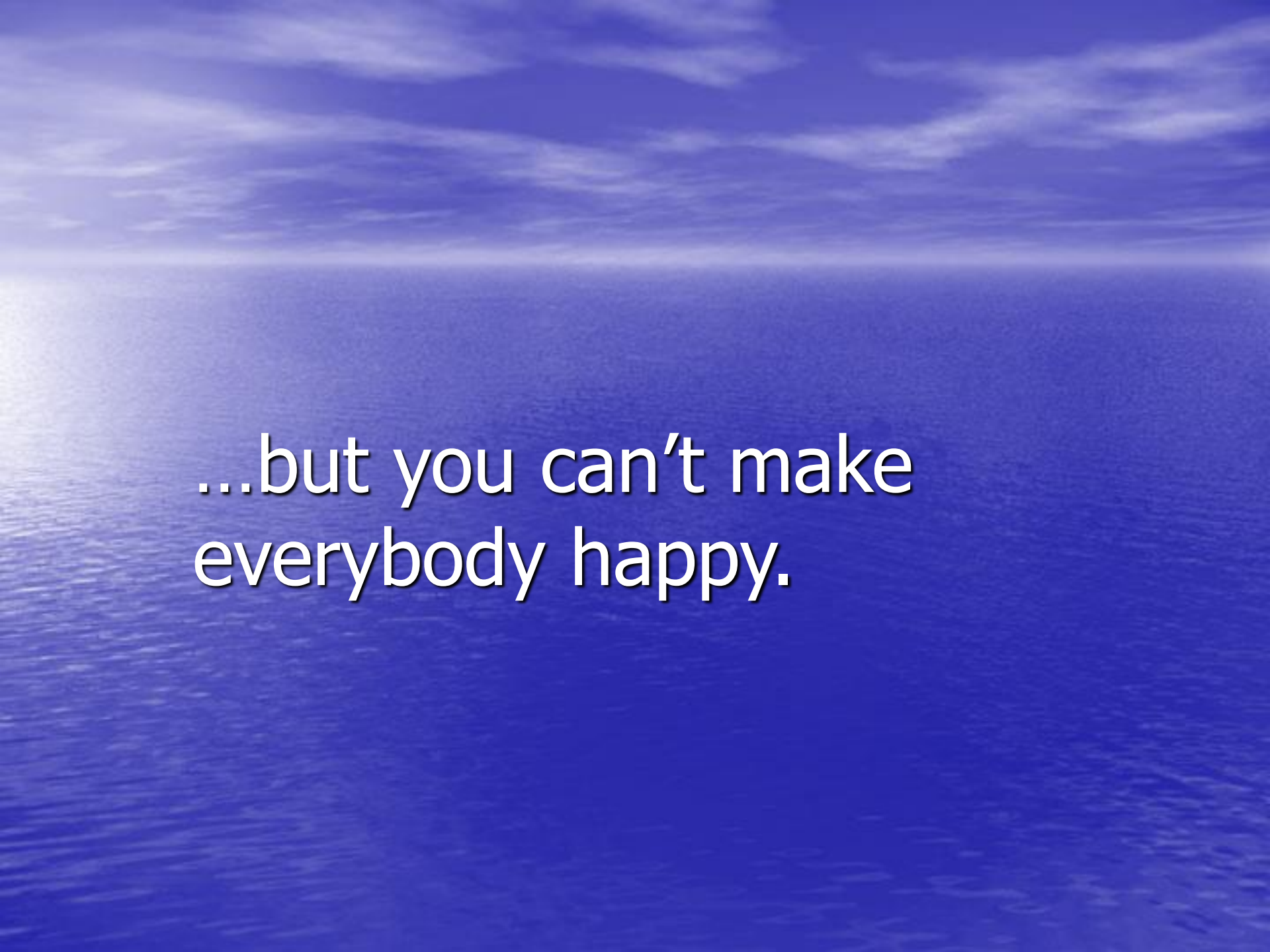


Coachwhip
snakes



Trying to create a predator-free
nesting area....

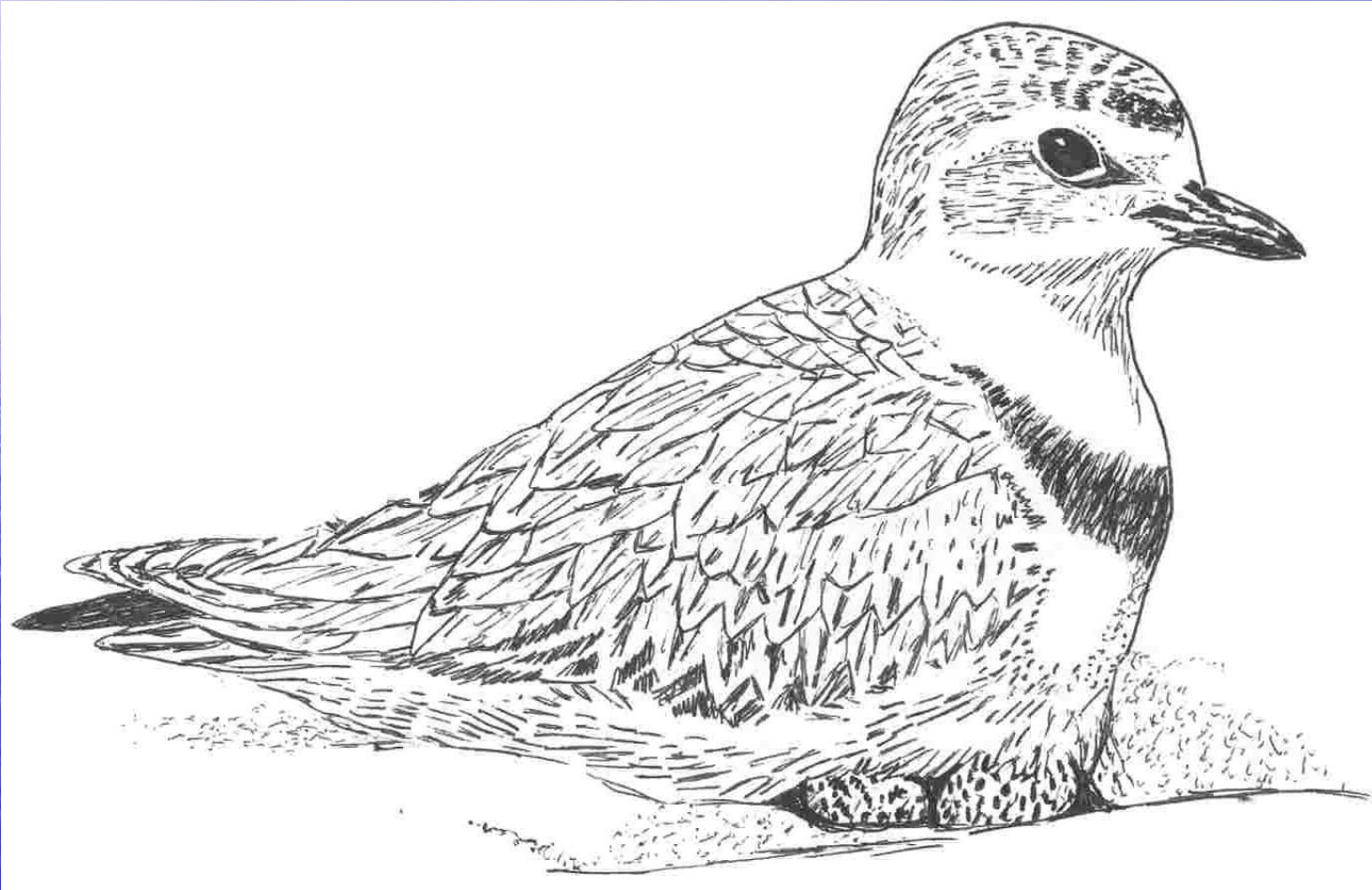




...but you can't make
everybody happy.

Wilson's plover:

a threatened species in SC





Removing bottom of fence and installing plover gates

Electric Fence





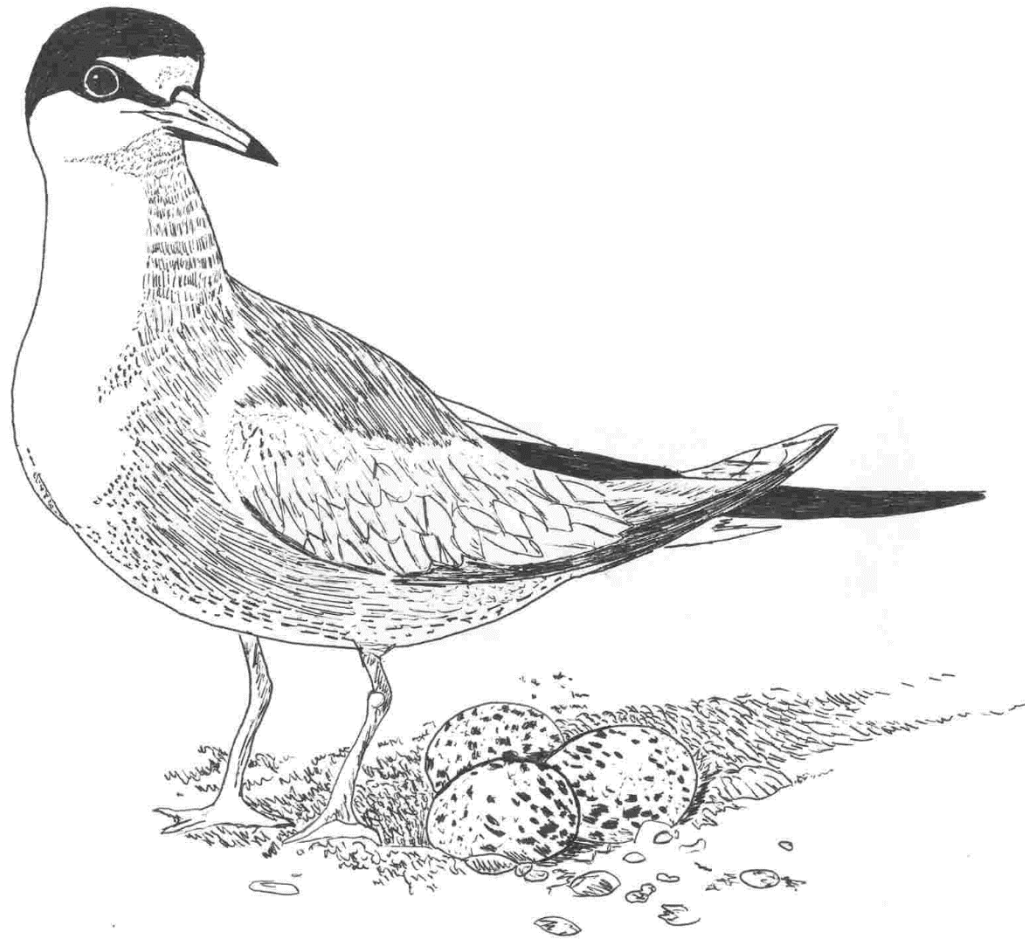
Solar powered

And activated only
at night:

- To conserve batteries,
- For visitor safety, and to
- Be active when mammalian predators are.



Least Tern: a threatened species in SC



Murremaid Sound System

a solar-powered stereo for the birds



Decoys



Friends of
Huntington Beach
State Park members
hand-carving and
painting least tern
decoys.



Education
+ Volunteer Labor
= Service Learning



Decoys at Work

Partnering with
SCDNR to paint
decoys for use
on their
managed
islands.

Photos by Felicia Sanders





Other ideas for Service Learning projects:

- Installing fence
- Roping off and signing overwash areas & other potential nesting sites
- Making “No Dogs/ Shorebirds Nesting” signs
- Seeding potential nesting sites with driftwood for Wilson’s plovers
- Constructing chick shelters

Dealing with Disturbance from Dogs



NO DOGS ALLOWED FROM THIS SIGN NORTH TO THE INLET
Resource Protection Area Includes Dunes, Beach, and Intertidal Areas

Help us protect our coastal birds!
This area provides essential habitat for threatened and declining shorebirds

- Disturbance from dogs can disrupt feeding and resting of migrating and wintering birds
- Disturbance from dogs can cause the loss of eggs and chicks of beach nesting birds

SECTION 51-3-145. Certain acts unlawful at state parks.
It shall be unlawful for any person to commit any of the following acts at any park or facility under the jurisdiction of the Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism: (B) Killing, harming, or harassing any mammal, bird, reptile, or amphibian, except by the permit issued by the department or by permit issued by the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources for designated Game Management Areas.

SECTION 51-3-146. Penalties for certain unlawful acts. Any person violating the provisions of Section 51-3-145 shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction shall be fined not less than twenty-five dollars nor more than two hundred dollars or imprisoned for not more than thirty days.

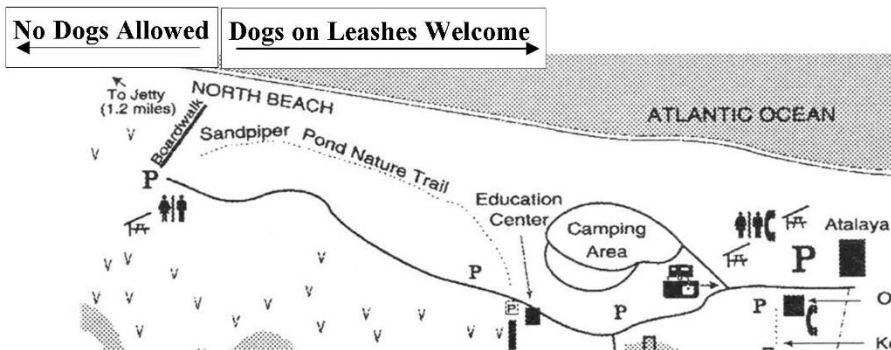


A Beach for the Birds



The area of the park from the North Beach Parking Lot north to the jetty is now being managed as a special Resource Protection Area to protect nesting, roosting, and feeding shorebirds and seabirds. Recent research has shown that dogs, even on leashes, are a very disruptive influence to many bird species, and can reduce the diversity of bird species by 50%. Some of these animals, such as piping plovers, least terns, and Wilson's plovers are threatened with extinction due to loss of habitat and introduced predators. To help ensure the continued survival of these animals, **dogs are now prohibited on the beach from the North Beach Parking Lot north to the jetty**. Pets on leashes are still welcome to enjoy the rest of the beach and park.

Thank you for your help in protecting our threatened wildlife.





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